

Dated: March 14, 1995.

**Arthur S. Briggs,**

*Acting Deputy Regional Forester,  
Southwestern Region.*

[FR Doc. 95-6773 Filed 3-17-95; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

### Southwest Washington Provincial Advisory Committee Meeting

**AGENCY:** Forest Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of meeting.

**SUMMARY:** The Southwest Washington Provincial Advisory Committee will meet on April 20, 1995 in Kelso, Washington, at the Red Lion Inn, near Interstate 5 at Exit No. 39. The meeting will begin at 9 a.m. and continue until 4 p.m. Meeting purpose is to orient new Advisory Committee members to the President's Northwest Forest Plan and the Advisory Committee process.

Agenda items to be covered include: (1) Introductions of Committee members; (2) context of the Advisory Committee, including background on the Forest Plan; (3) mission and purpose of the Province Advisory Committee; (4) overview of Federal agency missions; (5) Advisory Committee roles; (6) Public Involvement strategy; (7) Decision Process and Criteria; (8) Travel Requirements; (9) Public Open Forum.

All Southwest Washington Provincial Advisory Committee meetings are open to the public. Interested citizens are encouraged to attend. The "open forum" provides opportunity for the public to bring issues, concerns, and discussion topics to the Advisory Committee. The "open forum" is scheduled near the conclusion of the meeting. Interested speakers will need to register at the door. The Committee welcomes the public's written comments on committee business at any time.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Direct questions regarding this meeting to Mark Maggiora, Public Affairs Officer, at (360) 750-5007, or write Forest Headquarters Office, Gifford Pinchot National Forest, 6926 E Fourth Plain Blvd., PO Box 8944 Vancouver, WA 98668.

Dated: March 10, 1995.

**Ted C. Stubblefield,**

*Forest Supervisor.*

[FR Doc. 95-6710 Filed 3-17-95; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

RIN 0596-AA

### Use of Bait in Hunting

**AGENCY:** Forest Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice; adoption of final policy.

**SUMMARY:** The Forest Service gives notice of its final policy on the use of bait in hunting resident game on National Forest System lands. This policy has been issued to Agency employees as an amendment to the Forest Service Manual 2640. The intended effect of the final policy is to clarify the Agency's role with regard to baiting in relation to the role of the States and, thus, to provide a consistent approach to the regulation of baiting resident game on National Forest System lands.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** This policy is effective March 20, 1995.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Questions about this policy should be addressed to Robert Nelson, Wildlife, Fish, and Rare Plants Staff, Forest Service, USDA, P.O. Box 96090, Washington, D.C. 20090-6090, (202) 205-1205.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**Background**

On April 14, 1994, the Forest Service published a proposed policy on the Agency's role in regulating the placement of bait to attract resident game on National Forest System lands (59 FR 17758). Public comment was invited. The comment period closed June 13, 1994.

The focus of the proposed policy was that the Forest Service would continue to honor State regulations of fish and wildlife populations, including hunting and hunting practices. Where baiting is allowed by States, the practice would continue on National Forest System lands unless the authorized officer was to determine on a site-specific basis that the use of bait conflicts with Federal laws or regulations, forest plan direction, or other uses or users. In such case, the authorized officer could prohibit or restrict use of bait, in an area, by issuing a closure order. However, the authorized officer would first consult with the State fish and wildlife agency to see if the conflict could be resolved without a closure or restrictive order.

During the public comment period, the Forest Service received 1,249 comments on the proposed policy. Comments were received from 76 groups and private organizations, 29 State fish and wildlife agencies, 1 American Indian Tribal government, 1 Federal agency, and from private citizens located in 46 States and the District of Columbia. Of the total comments received, 86 percent were from individuals representing themselves. Forty-five percent of the comments agreed with the proposed

policy either in its entirety or with suggested modifications, while fifty-one percent did not support the proposed policy. The analysis of the public comments was accomplished using standard Forest Service procedures designed to ensure an objective and systematic analysis. The Agency has considered these comments and, in response, where appropriate the Agency is adopting modifications in the final policy. A summary of the comments received and the Agency's response to them follows.

### Summary of Comments Received

Form letters and modified form letters made up 61 percent of the 1,249 total comments. The majority of these letters were not directed at specific provisions of the policy; rather, most of these comments objected to the practice of baiting in hunting but did not address State and Federal roles in the administration of a hunting practice. These respondents simply stated that they were against the use of bait in hunting and that this practice should not be allowed on National Forest System lands. Among reasons cited were that bait is detrimental to the non-hunting recreation experience; and bait may cause pollution or may be a risk to human health and safety. Other topics addressed were the need for environmental documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act, State versus Federal jurisdiction over wildlife resources, population decimation and species viability, threatened and endangered species being killed, conditioning of wildlife to human food sources, and disruption of biological diversity and ecological processes.

A summary of specific comments by broad subject and the Agency's response to these comments follows.

1. *Comment:* Impact of Baiting on Recreation. A number of respondents feel that baiting causes a garbage problem, is detrimental to recreation experience, is a source of pollution, and poses health and safety risks. The reviewers feel that baiting has a negative impact on the majority of forest users and, therefore, grants a small group "special advantages on land meant to be enjoyed by all."

*Response:* The fact that an activity is enjoyed by a minority of forest users does not mean that the activity should be banned. The Forest Service has consistently cooperated with State agencies to help them develop regulations that minimize conflict between hunters using baits and other forest users. Under the proposed policy, the Forest Service would close specific